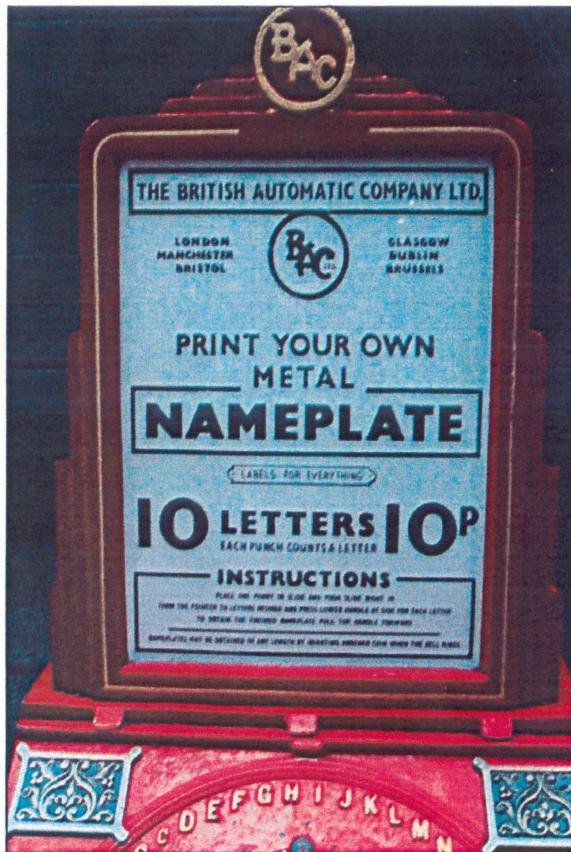


MECHANICAL MEMORIES MAGAZINE

ISSUE 18

OCT. 2007



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Coventry Auction
Stamper mystery solved!
Lost Bolland machine found
International Arcade Museum

Mechanical Memories Magazine

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Editorial

Hello again. Well, I guess the big news this month is the Coventry auction. This will be our third event, and with 200 lots entered in the auction so far, it could be our biggest. At one point though, it looked as if it wouldn't (or couldn't) go ahead. As a result of our ridiculous gaming laws relating to the sale of machines, we are no longer able to apply for a permit, as we have for the two previous events. In order to save the day, we've joined forces with Classic amusements in order to run the event legally, but I think the time has now come for the collector community to stand up and be counted; I for one am no longer prepared to be considered a criminal for merely pursuing a hobby. Anyway, more of that another time.

Now, do you remember the mystery metal label stamper that Brian King discovered in Australia? Well, it looks as if we've solved the mystery of who produced it. However, we Brits should perhaps bow our heads in shame, as it's taken an Australian and an American to sort it out! At this point I should like to thank Bob Klepner and Greg McLemore, who have been most helpful in identifying the machine's manufacturer. I've decided that the British Automatic Company Ltd will make an ideal project for the magazine, as it appears they were probably a fairly major player for half a century, and yet nothing is known about them. Full account from page 7.

On page 14 onward, you'll find news of the International Arcade Museum, which I think should be of great interest. Before you all get over-excited, it's not a real museum where you can play hundreds of machines; it's an Internet based museum which is evolving into an ever expanding resource which will be of benefit to us all. If you still don't have Internet access, this could be another good reason for getting connected!

And finally, I have yet another apology to make with regard to spelling mistakes. Actually, this wasn't so much a spelling mistake; more a case of not knowing what day of the week it was. If, at any time in the future, I ever make reference to the Sept. 07 issue.....it's the one with August on the front! I've no idea how I did that; there's not even supposed to be a magazine in August. I guess I was just tired and worn out after a long summer in Brighton.

I look forward to seeing you all in Coventry

All the best

Jerry

Coventry '07

Once again, it looks like being a great show! With over 200 lots so far, and more to come, it could be our biggest. Many thanks for the support we've received from vendors and to those who have already reserved catalogues.

There's a great selection of machines on offer, including: several BMCo allwins; R&W What's My Line; Saxony allwins, including a really nice reserve ball; Win a Smarties; Bryans Elevenses; Oliver Whales.

One armed bandits range from Segas, Ballys and Bellfruit at the lower end; Jennings Governors; Mills Extraordinary; a beautiful Pace Comet in consul case and a rare Mills Hi-top in a carved wooden cowboy figure.

Other machines include: Essex Stock Exchange; Haydon and Urry Tivoli; a rare Bally Prospector pinball with payout; counter-top pushers; Bryans Double Decker; plus a good selection of interesting electro-mech wall machines, including a very rare French machine from the 1930s. And for the serious Bryans collector, a very rare Penny-go-round.

Smaller lots include: a nice selection of gum and nut vendors; 2 Mutoscope reels; some interesting bandit spares; coin counters and change machine; various coins and tokens. Plus a good selection of books and paperwork.

As I mentioned last month, we will allow children this time but please notify us first. Please phone me on 07710 285360.

I think we can all look forward to a great day

See you on the 25th

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Stamper Mystery Solved!

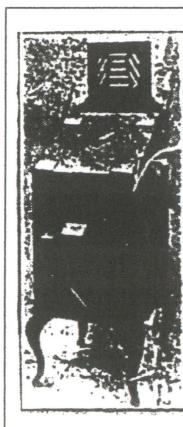
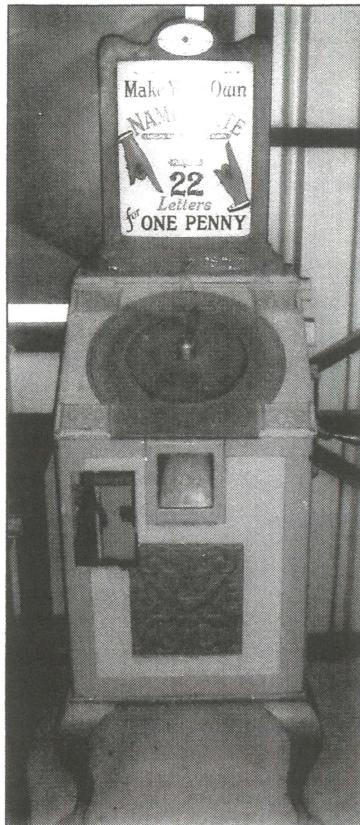
Well, maybe not conclusively, but I now have very convincing information relating to the origins of the 'Mystery Metal Label Stamper', and it's manufacturer.

You will remember that back in the September issue, Brian King related a short story of the mysterious metal label stamper he discovered on a visit to Queensland, Australia. The machine was allegedly manufactured by the British Automatic Company Ltd, but no information could be found on the company or it's product. I finally received a wealth of information a couple of weeks ago from a collector residing on the other side of the world, ironically the very place the machine was discovered – Australia. Bob Klepner, who will be known to many collectors over here, sent me a long and informative email with some great attachments. In particular, Bob sent a few pages from the operating manual of a much later machine produced by BAC (which Bob dates to the late 1940s), in which they state:

'Although we have been concerned with the sale, operation and servicing of Coin Operated Metal Tape Embossing Presses for over 40 years, this new press is the first which we have actually designed and produced ourselves. Even so, all the experience gained over the years has been built into our latest product, and we are confident that it is the most attractive up-to-date and efficient on the market.'

So, by their own admission, the British Automatic Company Ltd did not manufacture the mystery stamper; they just labelled it as their own. So who did? Well, I mentioned Roovers Brothers, basically because it is the only name I could think of associated with this type of machine. However, Bob believes that the mystery stamper is far more akin to the machines produced by Simplex Manufacturing Co., New York. Apparently, the Simplex company was set up by Herman Casler, the patentee of the mutoscope, in order to produce machines in competition with Roovers. It would appear that the Simplex machines were not a great success in America, and Bob says he knows of only one that has survived there.

I also learned from Bob that at least one BAC machine survives in this country, and can be found at the National Railway Museum, York. This provides us with a rather nice irony, as this is the very place Brian King lives! (York, not the Railway Museum). Bob emailed a picture of the BAC stamper at York, together with a contemporary advertisement for the Simplex machine, which at this time was the only picture of a Simplex I had. Despite the very poor picture quality, I instantly identified similarities between the Simplex and BAC machines. All the dimensions and proportions seemed to be right and the legs appeared to be identical (although that could be said of numerous different machines of that era). But the most compelling evidence was the four motifs cast in the corners of the top dial plate. Even allowing for the poor quality, these are clearly evident in the Simplex advertisement, and so I determined that the BAC machines were almost certainly Simplex. However, more information was yet to come.



BIG MONEY AT FAIRS.

The Simplex Name Plate Machine can be used with or without the slot attachment. An operator standing by the machine can easily knock out \$25 a day, making plates of any length.

**PRICE \$150,
INCLUDING FULL ROLL OF ALUMINUM TAPE.
HANDSOME. SIMPLE. STRONG.
SIMPLEX MFG. CO., 841 Broadway, New York**

The two known BAC stampers and the Simplex advertisement. Note the cast motifs in the corners of the dial plate on the BAC machines – clearly evident in the Simplex ad.

A week or so after hearing from Bob, I was talking with Greg McLemore, who lives in Las Angeles. I raised the subject of the BAC/Simplex machines and he agreed that the BAC stamper was almost certainly a Simplex. I asked Greg how many Simplex machines he knows to have survived in the States, and he said he had probably seen several over the years but couldn't remember where. However, he did recall one selling on eBay a while back, which came from California. More importantly though, Greg recalls a Simplex that sold at auction in France, for which he was able to email me a picture.

This picture provides almost conclusive evidence that the BAC machines were made by Simplex. Although the front and side castings are not as decorative on the 'French Simplex', the motifs on the four corners of the dial plate are clearly evident, although for some reason they appear to have been ground down and had the numbers 1 – 4 painted over them (funny people, the French)!

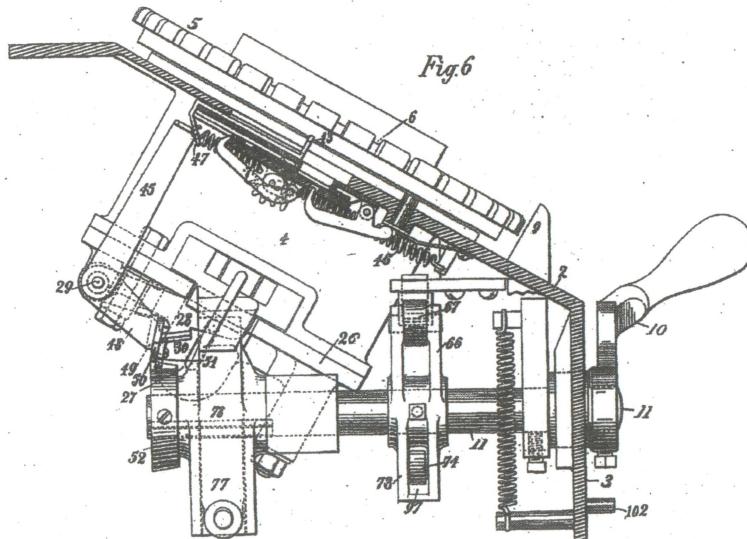


The Simplex stamper which sold at auction in France.

Perhaps the most conclusive evidence though, is the manner in which the Simplex machines operate. On the more common Roovers machines, letters are selected by turning a large dial and pressing down a lever, (located centrally at the front of the machine) to punch each letter. The final cropping operation is performed by the same lever. However, on the Simplex machine, the user turns a pointer to select each letter and is then required to press down a lever on the right-hand side of the machine. The finished label is then cropped by pulling forward a second lever mounted on the same side of the machine, toward the back. The same pointer and two levers are clearly evident on the BAC machine at York.

So that's it – problem solved! Well no, not entirely. Miraculously, Greg managed to turn up the Simplex patent, from the archive of the International Arcade Museum. The patent application, No. 750432, was filed in Oct. 1901 and finally approved in Jan. 1904. I'd already learnt from Bob that the Simplex company was set up by Herman Casler, so it came as no surprise to find that the patent cites Casler, jointly with John Pross, as inventors and was assigned to Simplex Manufacturing Co. However, the patent appears to describe a completely different machine; it's operation being more like the Roovers machines, and seems to imply that the design was changed at some time.

Now, I've already stated the way in which the Simplex machine operates. How do I know how it works? It's clearly stated in the instructions on the BAC machine at York. However, the patent not only describes a dial to select the letters as opposed to a pointer (which I suppose would be a relatively minor change), but also clearly

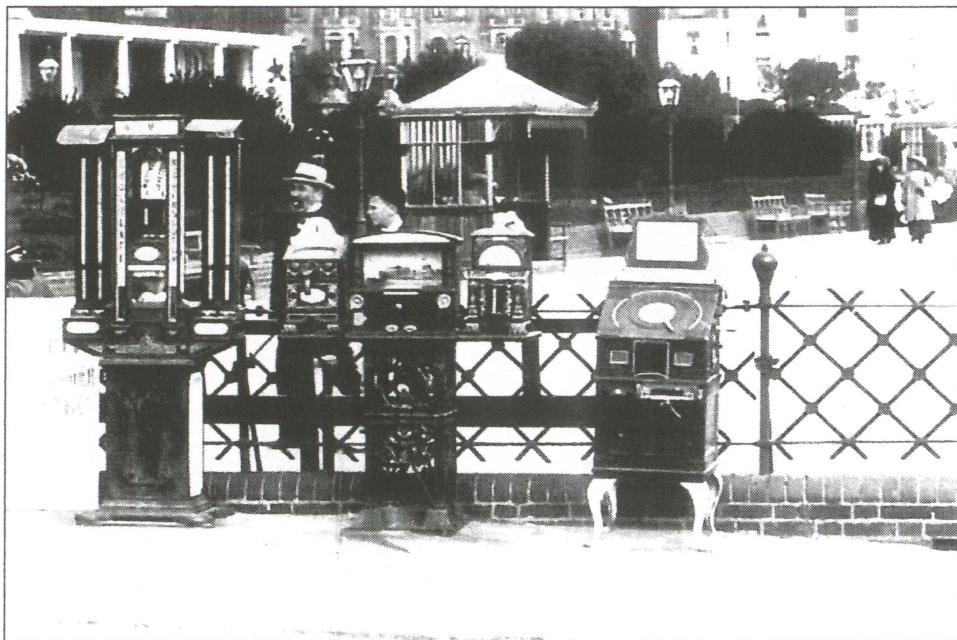


One of the drawings from the Simplex patent specification, which clearly describes a dial and just one operating lever.

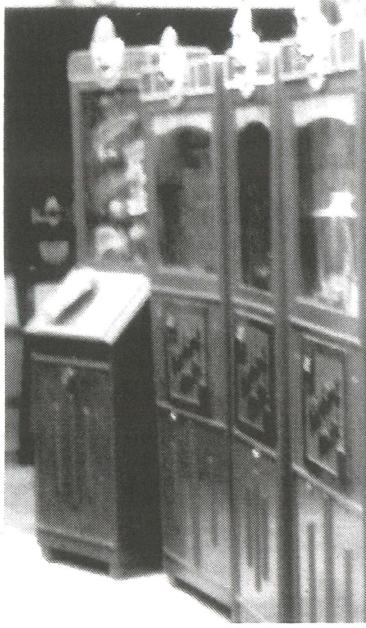
describes just one lever, positioned at the front of the machine. This, in my view, would constitute a major design change to the mechanism and rather begs the question: Did Simplex produce two different machines? Or maybe there were certain elements in the original patent that infringed Roovers' design, and thus caused Simplex to think again? But then if that were the case, would the patent have been granted in the first place? In solving one problem, we seem maybe, to have created another!

And what of the British Automatic Co. Ltd.? It seems odd that a company that traded for half a century or more should just vanish into obscurity. It seems they may have been a fairly large concern, as the front cover of the operating manual for their later machines boasts branches in six major cities, including Dublin and Brussels. So they were international! Were they only concerned with metal label stamping machines, or were they involved with other types of coin-op machines? One preliminary line of enquiry leads me to believe they may have dealt in viewing machines. There is an obvious link here with Simplex, as Herman Casler was not only the patentee of the Mutoscope but also one of the driving forces behind the American Mutoscope and Biograph Company.

Anyway, I thought this would make an ideal subject as the next project for the magazine. Let's see if between us we can unearth some information on this hitherto unknown British coin-op company.



Whilst writing this article, I remembered I had this picture of an impressive collection of cast iron machines at Broadstairs, Kent. I knew there was a metal label stamper included in the line-up, and guess what? It's a Simplex!



The Lost Bolland – Found!

Or perhaps I should say 'a' lost Bolland, as I'm sure there are others. Anyway, way back in the June issue, I published a fantastic picture of a line of Bolland working models at Chessington Zoo, thought to be in the seventies. On the far left was a machine that as yet has not been identified, which I guessed was a fortune teller or palmist. As it turns out, I wasn't far wrong; it's a Love Test and is alive and well in Minnesota, USA. Larry Bieza, who lives in the States, emailed me a couple of great pictures of the machine, which appears to be in some kind of museum or collection of bygones. Unfortunately, at the time of writing I have been unable to contact Larry to find out more, but I hope to have more details next month. However, it does raise the question: are there any more? Although it may not be clear from the picture, there is a large casting on the front of the machine (on which the cast 'hand' is mounted), which would have been made specifically for this machine, so it seems unlikely that only one machine would have been produced. Anyway, more Bollands news next time.

Knightsbridge Sale, 20th Nov.

Bonhams, Montpelier Street, London SW7 1HH

As some of you will know, Laurence Fisher left Christies earlier this year, and is now head of the Mechanical Music dept. at Bonhams. He contacted me recently with details of a few of the lots in his forthcoming Mechanical Music and Automata sale at Knightsbridge. I'm sure the Drunkard's Dream will be of particular interest to many of us, and the two player race game looks intriguing too. The mechanism is thought to be Ahrens, although I was not aware Ahrens made 'Monkey Climb' machines. Could it be Essex? I hope to be at the sale, so hopefully I'll be able to report back in the next issue.

Lot 52 Bolland Drunkard's Dream. Est. £4,000 - 6,000

Lot 53 Popeye and Monkey tree climber, two player race game. Est. £2,000 - 2,500

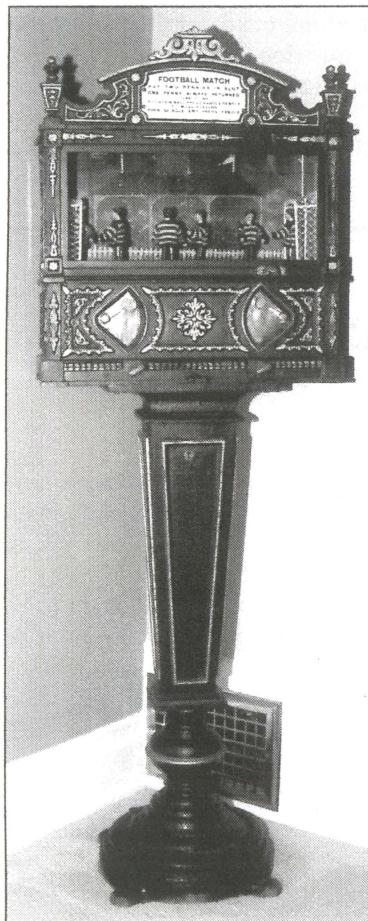
Lot 54 Domino wall machine. Est. £800 - 1,200

Lot 55 Clown-Catcher wall machine. Est. £400 - 600

Lot 56 French musical automaton. Est. £2,500 - 3,500

International Arcade Museum

The International Arcade Museum is the largest Internet museum of the art, inventions, and history of the amusement and coin-operated machine industries. A great resource for beginner and advanced collector alike are its associated web sites. Over 10,000 people visit them every day. The museum also has access to the personal library and coin-op machines of Greg McLemore, the Los Angeles based collector who serves as executive director of the International Arcade Museum.

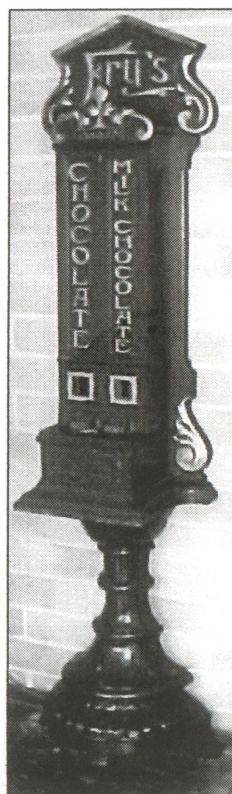
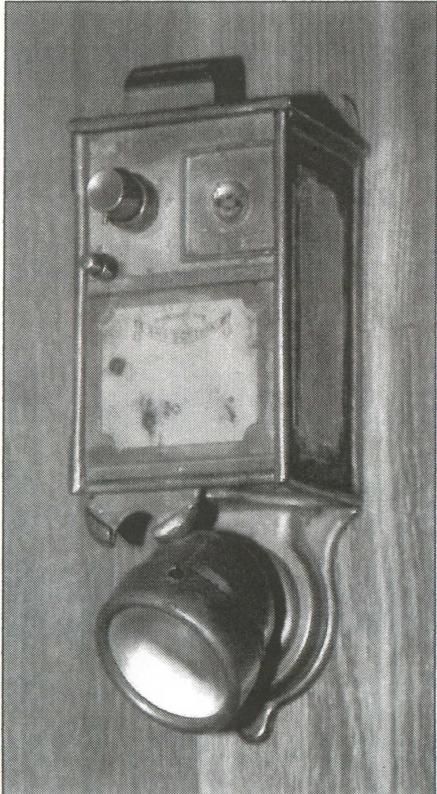


*Left: Rare six man Football Match, two player game by Automatic Sports Co.
Right: Two player Cricket game by Essex Auto Manufacturing Co.*

25 Years of History

The International Arcade Museum started out as something more modest -- the Killer List of Videogames. In the 1980s, video arcade enthusiasts gathered on modem-based dial-up bulletin board systems and CompuServe forums. This evolved into the KLOV and the KLOV's list of videogames and list of videogame cheats at the start of the 1990s.

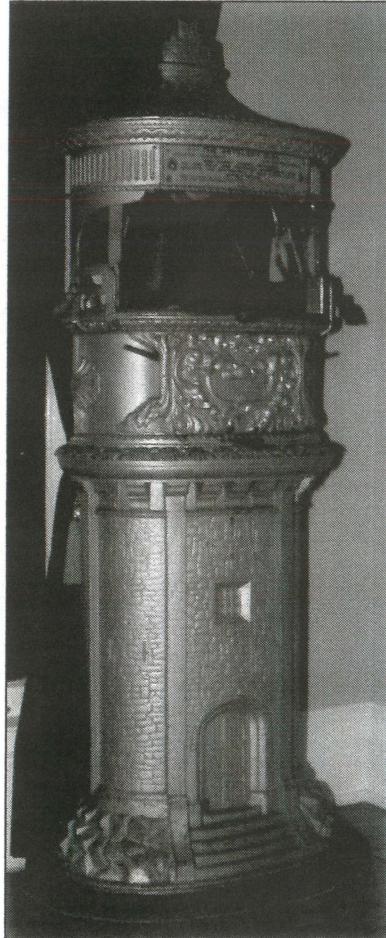
In March 1993, the list finally passed the 1,000 entry point. At this time, the largest entry had 4 lines of text with a maximum of 75 characters per line, and it was distributed via BBS systems, and Usenet on the Internet. In late 1999, the KLOV finally reached 2000 entries. Under Brian Johnson's leadership, KLOV entries became encyclopaedia pages with extensive text and graphics. Greg McLemore and his company WebMagic took over the KLOV at the start of 2000 and by February 2000, the KLOV's online presence was moved to KLOV.COM. By the end of 2000, the KLOV had 3000 entries, and it furthered its lead as the Internet's largest reference for coin-operated video games.



*Left and right: Two beautifully ornate chocolate venders: Cadburys and Frys.
Centre: Coin-operated light, installed on the Cunard ship Scythia I.*

In December 2002, the International Arcade Museum was created to expand on work done by the KLOV over the previous decade. The KLOV became part of The International Arcade Museum and 6000 entries covering early coin-operated machines were added. The KLOV passed 4000 video-game entries in September 2003, and there were now also 8000 non-videogame entries. At the start of 2005, there were nearly 13000 total entries in our encyclopaedia.

While the KLOV was getting formed back in the 1980s, another collector, Rick Schieve, started an informal list of dedicated video game collectors. In 1990 Steve Ozdemir created the Video Arcade Preservation Society, and became the first official 'VAPS Keeper.' Through much effort, Steve built VAPS into an organization with more than 200 members and 1300 games. Kevin Ruddy took over managing VAPS for a decade starting in 1995. Kevin created the web interface to VAPS, which grew its membership dramatically.



In 2006, the International Arcade Museum and the Killer List of videogames began serving the role as 'VAPS Keeper'. The web sites were linked together in multiple ways and they continue to grow. As of this writing, VAPS has 3556 members who in turn own 38,307 coin-operated video games (3154 distinctly different titles).

Collector Benefits

The KLOV® web site has over 4,000 web pages of content on nearly every known coin-operated video game ever made. Pages like: <http://www.klov.com/G/Galaga.html> contain cabinet photos, screen shots, game play information, cheats, trivia, and technical information. The Video Game Preservation Society, a collector game census society, provides scarcity ratings for KLOV for each machine.

The international Arcade Museum's web site is much newer. Since it is still lacking a lot of photos and descriptions, many of its pages look fairly empty at first glance. Treasure lies within, however. For over 99.9% of the nearly 9000 non-video machine entries, book references are listed noting every known book (with page numbers) that show photos of the machine in question. These book references are often a great source for additional information. This site not only covers arcade games, but in fact a wide range of coin-operated machines. Machines can be looked up by name, manufacturer, date, or keywords.



Above: A bewildering collection of working models.

Opposite left: Marksman single player shooting game by Automatic Sports Co.
Opposite right: Artillery Duel two player shooting game by Automatic Sports Co.

The International Arcade Museum also hosts very active coin-op message boards with over 200,000 messages posted to date. There are active coin-operated videogame and pinball forums, as well as new and growing forums for gambling slot machines, trade stimulators, jukeboxes, vending, and scales.

An exclusive set of collector tools for searching eBay have also been provided by the museum in conjunction with Ace.com. By visiting <http://www.ace.com/iam/> collectors can see the 100 coin-op items with the most bids on eBay.com. Even more exciting, visitors can see the coin-operated items on ebay.co.uk or eBay.com for which the most amount of eBay users have clicked on to add to their wish lists. This functionality isn't even available on eBay's site!

In the works in the near future is an expanded library section, including scans of old coin-op advertising.

Greg McLemore

Greg is an Internet entrepreneur who has spent much of his life in front of a keyboard. His interest in coin-op machines stems from his interest in games and of the elegance and ingenuity of these non-digital machines. He remembered visiting the Penny Arcade in Disneyland (California) as a child. Many years later, in the autumn of 1999, he bought an old Grandmother Fortune Teller machine he accidentally stumbled upon on eBay that was similar to a machine at Disneyland. It was the start of a new passion.

Greg's collection spans from the mid-1800s to present. Of his nearly 500 machines, over 350 of them are large floor model machines, and over 100 of these are English. The bulk of the collection is composed of pre-1930 arcade machines, but there is also a sampling of coin-operated antique gambling slot machines, vending, scales, and music machines. Although most of the machines were made in the US or the UK, Greg also has a good selection of French and German machines too.

A lot of historical pieces are in the collection, including the earliest three floor model coin-op arcade machines, the earliest known coin-operated light, the earliest known coin-operated kiddie ride, and one of each colour of the first coin-operated video game ever made, Computer Space, including the only white Computer Space ever made.

Penny Arcadia – From Pocklington to Pasadena

As many collectors can relate, Jon Gresham had very pleasant memories of time spent in an amusement arcade as a child. As an adult he learned that many older machines were not being perceived to be valuable and were being thrown away. In the spring of 1970 he was given his first machine by a showman friend.

What quickly developed was not just a hobby, but a passion to save old machines and their history. John searched the country for old machines, and in March 1981 he purchased a Cinema in Pocklington, outside York. The building dating to 1690 became the home of Penny Arcadia, which Jon and his wife Patricia opened on 17th July 1982. Along with some film and live entertainment, the working models, Mutoscopes, wall machines, fortune tellers, and competitive games entertained visitors for many years.

Patricia decided to close Penny Arcadia in the mid-1990s a little while after the death of her husband. She resisted selling the collection over the intervening years. A few years ago Greg met Pat, and they got along very well. She soon found that Greg was interested in keeping the bulk of the collection intact. Greg brought the collection to Pasadena (Los Angeles), and has been adding to it ever since. He still refers to it as the Penny Arcadia Collection of English Machines.

For more information:

For more information on Penny Arcadia and the Gresham family, please see: 'Penny Arcadia – A Concise History and Museum Guide' by Jon Gresham", insert to Arcadia 85 auction catalogue.

'Pocklington Paradise', Vintage Amusement Magazine, Spring/Summer 1992.

'The sad loss of Jon Gresham', Pinball Players Magazine, Volume 17, Issue 2 (1995).

Please visit:

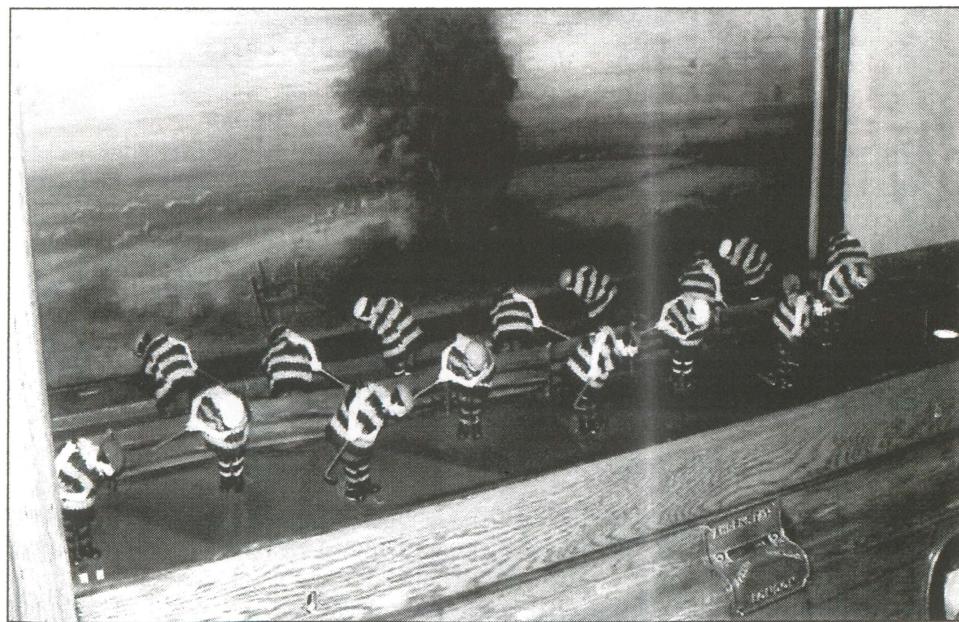
www.arcade-museum.com – Main International Arcade Museum Site

www.klov.com – Killer List of Videogames

www.vaps.org – Video Arcade Preservation Society

forums.webmagic.com – IAM Message Forums

To Contact Greg: greg2007@mclemore.co.uk



Golf Competition, two player game by Ahrens.

Lineage ads. are free to subscribers and will run for two issues, unless you instruct me otherwise. Please ensure I have your ads. by the 20th of the month for inclusion in the next month's issue. Remember to include your telephone number and the area where you live. Post or e-mail to the address on page 2

For Sale – Breaking Collection

Oliver Whales allwin Win a Rowntrees Fruit Gum, on old penny play.

BMCo allwin – Gallery/fluted cabinet.

Reserve Bonus ball wall machine, with fluted cabinet.

Bryans Castle Top Elevenses allwin, on old penny play.

Bryans 6 Win Clock, in crackle finish case with jackpot, on old penny play.

Bryans Bullion on 1p play.

Oliver Whales allwin Take Your Pick, on old penny play.

Ruffler & Walker What's My Line, on old penny play.

End of pier floor standing 3D viewer, with Skegness views. Ornate cast legs and deco top flash. 20s/30s, on halfpenny play.

Circle Skill 20s/30s wall machine, 1d play.

Kraft Extrawin allwin, with centre rotor, on old penny play.

All machines are with keys and in good working order. Some pictures available. Phone for more details.

Pete 01507 462070 (Lincs.)

For Sale

Rare opportunity to acquire two classic video machines: Space Invaders I and Space Invaders II. Both need some attention. To be collected from Lancs., near M6. £200 the pair.

Clive 01489 784038

For Sale

Bollands Predicta fortune teller, in the iron clad case. Complete, original, in very nice condition. Just place a penny in and wait until the pointer stops to find out what is in store for you. Yes this is one of the three most desired and sort after. For a fair market price please phone.

Stuart 01768 341703 (Cumbria)

Mobile 07854 568748

Wanted

Tip-em-off or Seesaw wall machine.

Darren 01942 732308 (Wigan)

Wanted

For the newer type Super Challenger, a complete knob mechanism on left of fascia that turns the penny deflector mechanism. Any condition.

Brian 01347 811532 (York)

For Sale

Bryans Fruitbowl on old penny play, in 1st class original condition, plays and pays perfect. Has the original door that locks with Bryans key. The mechanism has done very little work from new, and even has all the original blue paint. Price £1000 No offers, first to see will buy.

Stuart 07854 568748 (Cumbria)

Wanted

Laughing Sailor, Laughing Policeman, Laughing Clown or other. Original, repro., Roger Gillman etc. Good condition or not. Required for new seaside exhibition.

Darren 01942 732308
museumofamusements@blueyonder.co.uk

Bandits for Sale – Breaking Collection

Jennings Deci-bell Indian head console bandit on 1/- play.

Mills Poinsettia bandit, with numbered reels and jackpot, on old penny play.

Jennings Club Chief, with jackpot and escalator on 6d play.

Mills Bell-O-Matic bandit, with jackpot & escalator on 6d play.

Mills Cherry Front bandit, with jackpot and escalator on 6d play.

Aristocrat Starlight bandit on 1p play.

Novamat wall bandit on old penny play.

All machines are with keys and in good working order. Some pictures available. Phone for more details.

Pete 01507 462070 (Lincs.)

Wanted

Outer ball track and hammer box for a small BMCo allwin. Would consider a complete playfield.

Jerry 07710 285360 (Kent)

Wanted

Bagatelles, unusual or with nice graphics. Also old pre 1930s games, I.E. indoor, pub, board games etc.

Ivan 01273 401144

Pinball Machines Bought and Sold

Dead or Alive!

Call Gazza 07887 926601 (Essex)

Wanted

Ruffler and Walker two player games: Grand National and Grand Prix.

Charlie 07711 978806 (Essex)

For Sale

‘Hi-Ball’, 1930s floor-standing arcade machine by Exhibit Supply Co. £500 ono

John 01273 620608 (Brighton)

Wanted

The punch ball only to fit Charles Ahrens punch ball machine. Original or similar. Also looking for an old penny crane.

Jimmy 01782 397372
jimmyffinney@hotmail.com

For Sale

Vintage bar football table, thought to be 1950s or 60s. Solid mahogany, in nice condition. Price now reduced, as must sell, space needed. £300.00 ovno

Jerry 07710 285360

Wanted

Bollands working model wanted. Will part exchange for Ahrens Fireman Racer, plus cash adjustment. Phone for details.

Les 07905 372227 evenings

**Don't forget to order
your catalogue for
25th November**

**£4 cheques to:
Jerry Chattenton
10 Bedford Road
Dartford DA1 1SR**

**Or order online from the
MARKET**

www.pennymachines.co.uk

SPARES AND COINS

For Sale

New old stock, Bryans square Yale locks, with two keys. £10 each, plus £2 p&p

Tony 07974 460742 (Essex)
or email vanessa.raye@tesco.net

For Sale

Lowe & Fletcher and Yale locks. Will fit most Bryans machines. £12 per lock.

Tele. 07816 152111
Email jn168@aol.com

For Sale

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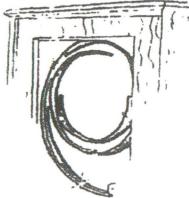
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ALLWIN TRACK

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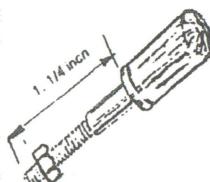
Inner with flat & nipple
17½" inside length
Middle 18" inside length
Outer 40" inside length



Win Tabs Red printed on Silver foil sticky backed 12 on a sheet



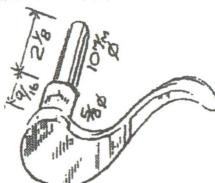
CHROMED 7 ball win gallery. 6 x 1. 9/16



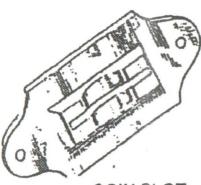
CHROMED THUMB STOP



10 mm dia



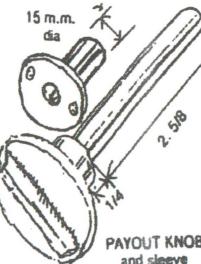
TRIGGER



COIN SLOT to suit 2p but can be filed bigger



CHROMED ARROWS Reversible.



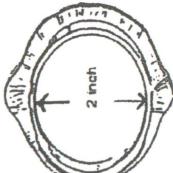
PAYOUT KNOB and sleeve

CHROMED PAYOUT BOWL

CHROMED KNOB SHIELD

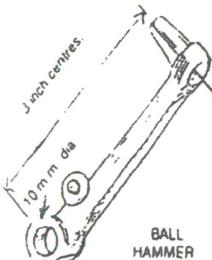


2.5 inch dia cup 2 x 0.25 inch fixing squares at 3.75 inch centres.

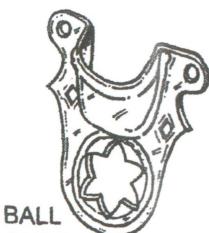


2 x tapped M5 fixing holes on extended nipples 2. 1/2 centres.

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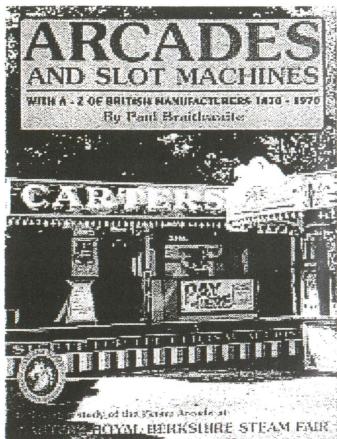
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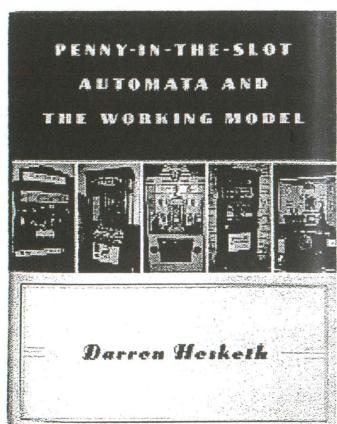
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